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B A L L A D S.

BY

THE LADY MIDDLETON,

AUTHOR OF "ON THE NORTH WIND—THISTLEDOWN."

LONDON:

C. KEGAN PAUL & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1878.

LOAN STACK

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TO

MY FRIEND AND MY FATHER'S FRIEND,

LOCHIEL.

*These few uncultured trifles to the score
Of thy known worth, approved to me, I lay ;
Ere yet the hills are dun and forests grey :—
Because a friendship was my sire's of yore,*

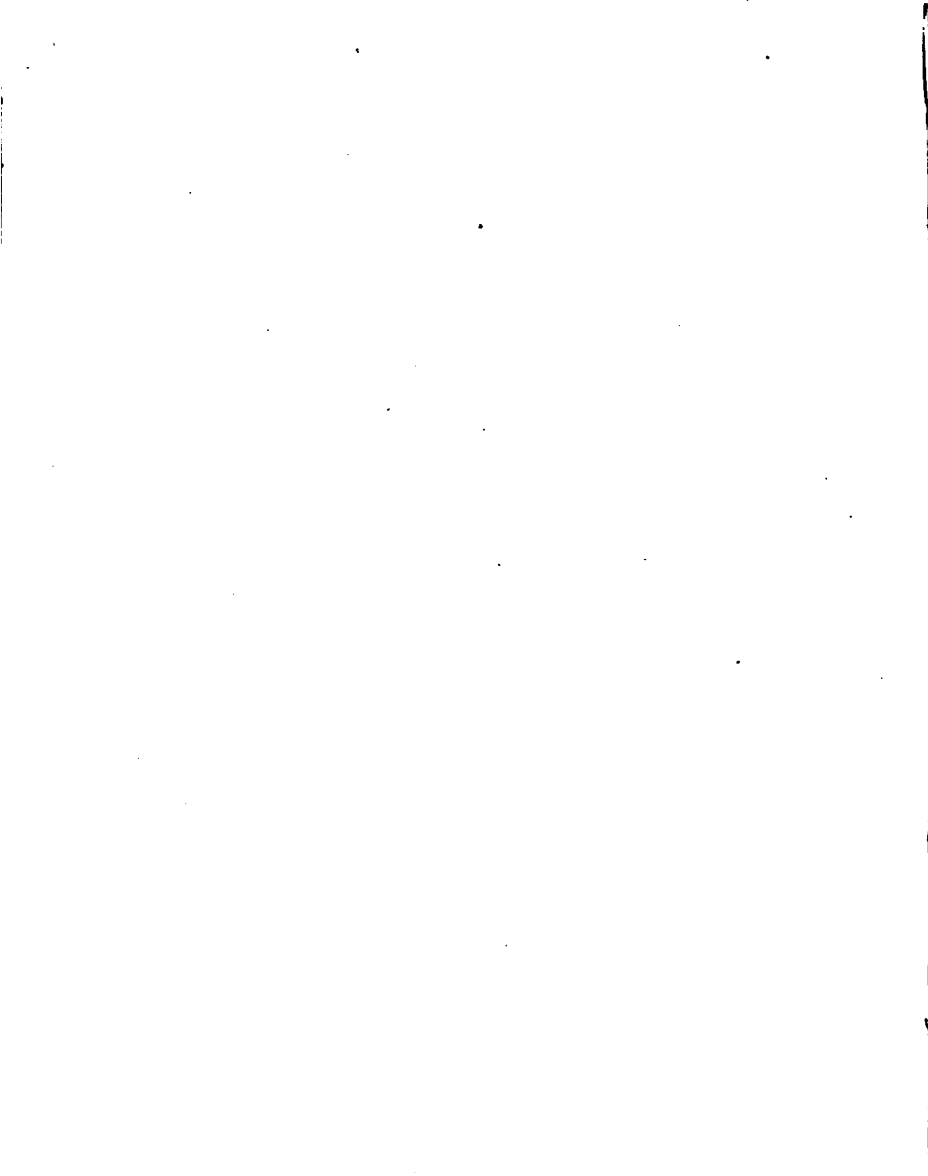
*Is mine, and precious—as the Seasons' ore
That on thy beech-leaves doth in splendour weigh
From Autumn's Midas-touch. Oh ! bright as they
Be Fortune's favours scattered at thy door.*

*May Life no heavier shade than cast those boughs
Show her that wears, and him that bears thy name,
And she shall bind the precepts on his brows*

*Wherewith nigh two-score Chiefs have graced Lochiel,
That he may keep these titles to their fame—
The "brave," the "wise," the "gentle," and the "leal !"*

E. M. W.

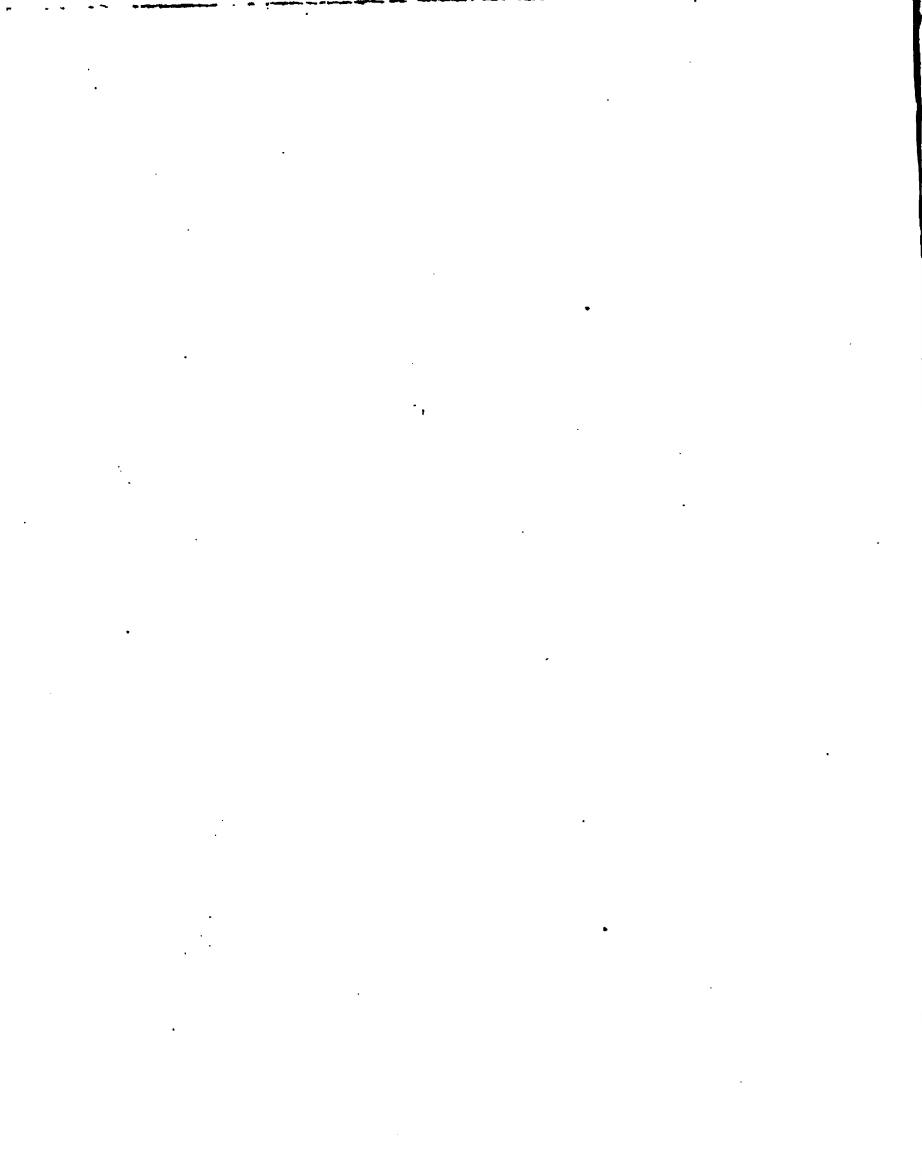
October, 1877.



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THE BALLAD OF THE BEECHES.

(By the river Arkaig at Achnacarry.)

OH ! I have stood by the river-side
When the spate came rolling down ;
And marked the rush of the roaring tide
In volume frothed and brown.

Oh ! I have wandered beneath the shade
Of the stately avenue,—
Ere the summer green begins to fade
To its gold autumnal hue.

And mingling with the waters' roar,
And sough of the wind-stirred leaves,
A waft of old ancestral lore
My listing sense receives.

* * * * *

THE BALLAD OF THE BEECHES.

Commands the Chief: "My woodmen all,
Attend me in the vale,
And bring me saplings straight and tall
To brave the wintry gale.

"I would erect upon the plain
A stately avenue:
Shall pass each Cameron Chief and train
In after-time there-through—

"To lead in sport of wood or field,
To meet his clan for war,
Or home be borne upon his shield
With coronach before!"

They marked the standing for the trees
On spots apart and wide,
That each might vaunt him to the breeze
In isolated pride.

But lo! arose a mighty cry
Across the lovely land;
"Our rightful king doth straightly hie
To claim each loyal brand!

“ From foreign shores to seek his own :
Now up, and follow me,
For never was a Cameron known
Could fail in loyalty ! ”

So spake Lochiel in high command :
“ Leave all,—for ill or weal !
The king may claim each heart and hand
That’s vassal to Lochiel.

“ Then dig a trench upon the bank
Where Arkaig rolls along,
And set my beechen babes in rank
To listen to her song :

“ And set them close to keep them warm
All through the lengthy days,
Till back I win, in fitting form
Mine avenue to raise ! ”

They dug a trench upon the bank
Where Arkaig rolls along,
And set the saplings all in rank
To listen to her song.

THE BALLAD OF THE BEECHES.

But o'er them time and seasons passed,
And by them sang the stream ;
Nor might that Chief return at last
His purpose to redeem :

For drear the coronach did sound
O'er all the west countree,
And a nobler plant was laid in ground
Than a sapling beechen tree.

Ochone it is ! for the great and brave,
For the hapless Stuart race,
For the cause such followers might not save,
And the rule they deemed disgrace.

Surely no grander monument
Can rise, Lochiel, to thee,
Than the beechen bower of branches—bent
In homage proud and free ?

For closely grew the trees in rank,
As close as they could grow,
Within their trench upon the bank
Beside the river's flow.

Their clasping boughs in clanship twine,
Like souls of the 'parted brave
That ever whisper in words divine
Through the music of wind and wave.

Fair bides the light on a golden throne
Of their autumn leāves at even ;
And that golden warrior soul is gone
To shine with the leal in heaven.



SONG.

O MERRY, merry maid, in the blythe spring morning,
Come to thy wooing in the primrose dell ;
Quit thine adorning,
Weary of scorning,
Patience is weary and 'gins to rebel.

Dainty little lass, with a kirtle kilted,
Stepping, tripping over the ferns,
Bright lay lilted,
Head-gear tilted
Low on the bonny brow the sun-kiss burns.

Scarcely the russet fronds will unfold their furling,
Scarce rue the pressure of that elfin tread ;
Gems in the curling
Tresses are pearling,
Rain-dripped of hazel-green bowering o'erhead.

Daffing laughing damsel, keep thy lover doubting,
Doubting no longer through the summer fair ;
Cease ever flouting
Me, lowly louting,
Lest thou torment me more than heart can bear.



A CHARACTER.

OF him, I wist not,—till he came to me,
Not through the monarch's council-chamber door,
Nor thence, where countered cannon flash and roar,
Not crowned with laurels of the Academy ;

But versed in Virtue's royal policy,
Ranked, medalled, clasped in Principle's high war,
Deep learned in purest classic of love-lore,
Out of his sunny home he came to me

And shone my sun. O thou whose holy eyne
Seem to seek better than they yet have seen,
And through whose outward beauty doth y-shine
The soul that Heaven and I shall know for great :
I built me no ideal ; but I ween
Fair found the real good in thine estate !

CUPID WITH HIS BOW.

O SILLY little bowman,
Thy triumph all is vain !
Dost deem thy spiteful arrow
Shall cause a life-long pain ?

I watched him in the morning,
Near where the vine-spray clings;
And the sun hailed suns in dew-gems
Upon his dainty wings.

He raised his dimpled shoulder,
And a mocking laugh laughed low
As a gay youth felt the arrow
Sped silent from his bow.

He stayed, and sought the blood-spot,
That youth of cheery song,
And sent his loud complaining
The morning breeze along.

But soon, a bird by-flitting,
Of plumage rare and gay,
Allured the plaining gallant,
And he cast his care away !

I watched the cruel bowman
At mid-day's sultry hour,
Rose-crowned and languorous, lying
Within a leafy bower.

There came a stalwart hunter,
Bedecked in manhood's pride :—
Up rose that trait'rous sleeper
And pierced him in the side.

Oh ! sore that hunter staggered,
And from his painful wound
Drew out the shaft, while freely
Blood fell upon the ground.

He leaned against a fruit-tree,
To bear his weary lot,
Whose luscious wealth fell round him :
He ate—his woe forgot !

I watched the bowman dancing,
At even, through the corn
Ablaze with gold and poppy,
As of the sunset born.

He spied a lonely reaper
Whose locks were touched with grey;
And he drew his bow and shot him
In vain malicious play!

The grey-beard sighed forlornly
As he felt the pricking pain;
But he said, "The day is waning,"
And seized his hook again.

"Oh! now," cried out the bowman—
And he stamped his rosy foot;
"I've done no lasting mischief,
And lost three shafts to boot!

"Three men this day I've piercèd
With mine unerring aim;
But soon my thrust is healèd,
My prowess put to shame!"

O bowman—cruel bowman !
If 'during harm dost crave,
If thou wouldst make a wound-scar
To bear until the grave,—

O bowman, I'll advise thee
(I spake beneath my breath !)
Leave men, and seek a woman
To wound unto the death !



ONLY A BRAMBLE!

OH! the glory of the leaves
In the autumn on the hedges :
What a crown of splendour weaves
Golden bracken, yellow briar,
And the crimson and the scarlet
Of the bramble—purple-fruited,
Where the school-boy, merry varlet,
Mouth and fingers blackened over
With the latest spoil he took,
Fails its sweetness to discover !

Oh! the bramble with its clusters
Heavy,—in yon sheltered nook,—
Orange, amber, scarlet-suited ;
Where the north-wind never blusters,
Tearing down the glorious fire
Of the autumn on the hedges !

Here, a spray with blossoms snowy
Telleth still of summer pledges ;

There, a leaf, forgot to turn,
Verdant yet with youth's adorning;
Laugheth, spring-like, 'mid the showy
Blaze of hues that madly burn
As the wakening of morning!

Where? that vaunted orange-bower—
Famèd in the balmy South,
With its heavy-scented flower,
Changeless foliage, shining globes,
Globes of green and golden fruiting,—
With the cladding can compare
Of the bramble in its robes,
In its fair September suiting—
Of the bramble in its routh,
Routh of glory mirrored there,
Where the stilly pool, at angle
Of the field, receives the beck
Light meandering through the sedges ;—
Where the honey-suckles deck,
Climbing round its caverned root,
All the ancient oak with tangle
Summer-sweet to senses nasal,
Autumn-berried, bright to eyne ;
And a bough of nutted hazel

Shoves impatient into sight ;—
Where the cattle, white and red,
Snort the water into ripples,
Thankless for the copious tipples
Out its bosom often ta'en ;
And the sapphire sky o'erhead
Peeps therein to note what cloud,
Errant 'cross her visions light,
Doth the autumn beauty shroud.

In the turning of the hedge
Glow's our sun-bright northern vine ;
Growing at the water's edge,
Growing in a mazy bush,
Throwing spray and garland out,
Trailing underneath the hedge
(Like a ruddy glinting snake
Gleaming through a tropic brake),
Where the grass grows free and lush ;
Wreathing all the hedge about
Like a multi-coloured mane ;
Crawling, creeping, o'er its crest,
Flowing, flaunting, east and west ;—
Such a rare harmonious twining
Of all splendour fair—combining,

ONLY A BRAMBLE!

Is the bramble, purple-fruited,
Snowy-bloomed, and sunset-suited,—
Is the bramble in the hedges ;
Is the glory of the leaves !



A GIFT.

TAKE thou my heart, my ladye and my love,
For well I wis
That not amiss
'Twill used be
By thee.
Thou wilt not flaunt it 'fore the eyes
Of other dames ; a prize
One of a score
Such goods, or more :
Thou wilt not stitch it in thy broidery,
Nor tramp it flouting with disdainful tread,
Or shame it with the like discourtesy
As 'twere a Thing—or dead !

Oh ! take my heart, my ladye and my love ;
Right willingly
I yield to thee

What no return

Shall earn.

Like to the fabled knight who set his love

On her, was dead and dust for centuries ;

Like one—some light that laughs in spheres above,

Who worships on his knees :

So, almost glad—

So, pure of passion, with adoring clad—

So is my mind to thee.

He errs who longs to own another's weal ;

Not thus I long—I only long to give

My best to her who knoweth how to deal

Best with that best ; and thou wilt make it live

For grand pure service, as a standard set

High toward heaven, yet

Planted in earth to be

A lure to victory

O'er sense and self for others—frail like me.

Take thou my heart, my ladye and my love :

No ill can dree

Thy fealty,

Nor shall he rue

His due

Whose right's thy being and thy heartis best :
My gift can work no harm to him or thee ;
Take it,—it burdens me !
Take it, and give me rest.

I do not long—I do not love,—I pray
Only my heart at thy dear feet to lay.
Take it,—'tis no more me, nor mine ;
Thine only—thine !

A LAMENT.

THE hand

Of Autumn is laid on the land ;

The robin is learning his winter note,

And swelling with music his rosy throat ;

Our woods have russet and amber and gold,

In wave and sweep of colour unrolled ;

The golden corn doth recall the beam

Of her ripening sun—as recalls a dream

Some actual glory,—and on the air,

Clear and bright as if frost were there,

Trills a reaper's laughter—blythe and free,

Waking and charming the whole countree.

But my heart is throbbing, and stounds my head,

Because of a darling—that's dead !

A sound

Of the wild deer's challenge around,

Echoes from corrie and bealloch and hill,
Where its dying reverberations thrill
To each glen's deep hollow. The golden brown
Of bracken clothes all the steepes adown
To yon speat-brimmed river's bronzy flow
By where tall monarch fir-trees grow,
Crowned of the sun's fair westering beam,
And the far Isles' peaked mountains dream
In the distance, a sapphire mystery
Guarding the bounds of a silvern sea.

But my heart is throbbing, and stounds my head,
Because of a darling—that's dead !

Alas !

That beauty and autumn must pass !
For ever to me is yon wild deer's bēll,
And birdie's note, but a funeral knell.
The grain was golden—the grain is mown,
The leaves' bright death has their woods undone,
Sore wails that stream to its waiting sea.
The hills have no pity for such as we.
Why so hard, when we loved thee so,
Autumn ? Where art, with thy wealth and woe ?

Could ye now comfort, or could ye give peace ?
Could ye be kindest and give me release
From my throbbing heart and my stounding head,
Because of the darling—that's dead ?



RUN-RIG.

A SCORE o' castles east and west
Belonged to many a Cumin bauld,
Whose walls, wi' fern and ivy drest,
Now seeks the eagle for her nest,
And shepherd for his fauld.

Oh! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, on your neebour keep an ec.

Upon a fair and grassy mound
Afore ye come Kingussie nigh,
No brawer castle could be found
In ken of Spey's enchanting sound
Than Raites,* in days gone by.

Oh! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, see the neebour friendly be.

* The old Comyn Castle of Raite was situated where now stands the modern house of Belleville, on the Highland line.

Now up and spak' the Lord o' Raites,
And fire flashed red frae out his ee :
"Clan Macintosh, 'ware thine estates ;
A prize to him the trap who baits,
Whence I will set them free !

Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, look ye baith to right and left.

"The Wild Cat miauls by night and day,
We get nae peace in glint or gloom ;
Full many a parent's hair is grey,
Full many a widow's left to pray—
An' fauld and byre are toom !"

Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, haud your weapon by the heft.

Oh ! then up-rose a henchman true,
And stood his Chieftain's seat aboon ;
And whispered words were full and few
Till light his master's visage grew
As shines through cloud the moon.

Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, keep a friend in front o' ye:

“ Now hie to Macintosh, away !

My trusty henchman—hie wi’ haste :
And tell him, on a certain day
I’ll such a banquet ’fore him lay
As ne’er again he’ll taste !

Oh ! when ye’re set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye’re set run-rig, dinna choke upon the bree.

“ Now hark, and listen, all my clan !

And see ye neither flinch nor fail ;
I will unfold to you a plan
Shall leave of Macintosh no man
To bear away the tale.

Oh ! when ye’re set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye’re set run-rig, see your plaid be close and
warm.

“ We’ll bid the clan to feast, I trow :

Within its sheath ye’ll loose each hilt,
An’ ilk o’ you shall seek a foe
From out their midst, whom sure ye know
Some dear one’s blood hath spilt !

Oh ! when ye’re set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye’re set run-rig, keep the targe upo’ your arm.

“ A’ sitting by the plankèd pine
Run-rig ye’ll set that murdering band,
A Mackintosh, a Cumin syne ;
And surer than the starkest wine,
Revenge shall nerve your hand !

Oh ! when ye’re set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye’re set run-rig, sparely toom the circling quaigh.

“ They’ll bring the fish from lochan clear ;
They’ll bring the muir-cock frae the hill ;
They’ll bring the haunch o’ gude red-deer ;
The smoking steak frae driven steer :
Then sit and eat your fill !

Oh ! when ye’re set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye’re set run-rig, gar your neebour sit abeigh.

“ But when the wild-boar’s gleaming tusk
Shines in his head to grace the feast ;
Ilk ither plaid a corpse maun busk,
Ye’ll drive your dirk into the husk—
And send the cursed soul East ! ”

Oh ! when ye’re set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye’re set run-rig, sit ye light and tread the floor.

Oh ! now the fair pine-board is bright !

Clan Macintosh's best are here,

An' a' the guests are set aright :

I vow it is a gallant sight

To see sae brave a cheer.

Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,

When ye're set run-rig, get the seat against the door.

But drumlie as an autumn speat,

The dusk o' Macintosh's smile !

Why seems the Chief a sign to wait ?

Wi' right hand in his plaid he sate,

And quaffed and laughed the while.

Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,

When ye're set run-rig, speak no word might breed a
strife.

They brought the fish frae lochan clear ;

They brought the muir-cock frae the hill ;

They brought the haunch o' wild red-deer ;

The smoking steak frae driven steer ;

An' host and guest 'bode still.

Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,

When ye're set run-rig, keep your wit to cheer the wife.

But o'er the threshold o' the door,
Ere passed the wild-boar's gruely head,
Ilk Macintosh was on the floor,
An' bent a dying Cumin o'er,
An' wiped his dirk so red !
Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, leuch na, ere the feast be done.

" O Raites, there's traitors in thy hold ! "
Clan Macintosh's Chief loud spake ;
" Thy fell intent they did unfold,
An' garred us try the venture bold—
We sleep not—when ye wake ! "
Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, hope ye for the morrow's sun.

Fu' loudly lowed the harried steer
That night upo' the skirling gale ;
And fiercely rang the raiders' cheer,
But sorer on a hearkening ear,
Cam' bairns' and widows' wail.
Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, think on a' that might betide.

Thank God—that if those halls be low,
And ancient grandeur ours no more ;
Such deeds by Spey and Findhorn's flow,
Shall be lamented, nevermo',
As wrought those feuds of yore !
Oh ! when ye're set run-rig, run-rig, run-rig,
When ye're set run-rig, be at peace on ilka side.



TO CERTAIN SCIENTIFIC MEN.

LIKE a poor insect, labouring to scale
Yon lofty mount piercing eternal snows,
Upon whose latest peak there hangs a veil
Of shadowy cloud ;—and up the Atom goes
With pain a foot or so—the weary trail ;
Then, looking up, “ Yonder’s no light,” he vows,
And spreads about with pride the assurèd tale,
And crawls another inch, and dies, and knows !—

So are, as he, ye scientific men,
Who of your scanty knowledge grow too fond ;
How can ye hope in your three-score-and-ten

To win Heaven’s secret to Earth’s tired sod ?
Might ye but gain that height, and see beyond,
Would not the light be there, attending God ?

GONE BEFORE.

O LOVE of my heart! though the night draweth nigh,
And youth with its fervour and beauty is fading,
I turn to my lyre, as in moments gone by,
And, the light wings of memory tearfully lading,
 I sing of the love that clings to thee yet,
 Though the sun of its earth-life for ever hath set.

In the heyday of youth, when the world through a veil
Of tender rose-vapour is spread to our gaze,
And the zephyrs seem tempered to woo our fair sail,
And sorrow itself showeth soft through the haze :
 Oh! say—is the passion youth's bosom then bears,
 Like the after-love, tried by the changes of years?

When an oak by the hewer is thrown to the ground,
And its ivy by ruthless despoiler is torn
From the form that she clung with such tenderness round,
She may linger a night, but will perish ere morn :
 Oh! give her no tear—she will welcome like me
 The mandate, in death that uniteth to thee.

O light of my life ! when the voices of heaven
Shall call me to share in thine infinite bliss,
How gladly my last mortal breath will be given !
How joyful I'll rise to that Home-land from this !
 Together we'll bask in the light of a love
 That borrowed its lustre on earth from above.



SONG.

(For Music.)

O TARDY, Spring, we weary for thee waiting !
Come, light-foot laughter, o'er the faded lea ;
Deep through the wild-wood, a thousand warblers mating
Bide, all bechilled, a signal, Sweet, from thee !

O loit'ring Love, no dallying, no delaying,
Further from thee we'll brook, but plain us sore ;
Till Heaven's wind shall shame thee at thy playing,
Wafting about thee our piteous sighs forlore.

O faithful Hope, though Spring and Love may linger,
Mocking the hearts their offering arms beguile,
Thou, Heaven-born, with kindly prompting finger,
Point us aloft to Heaven's eternal smile.

CORPSE-LIGHT.

THERE'S a pearl on the rose
Where her sweet lips uncloze ;
There's a gleam in the West,
When the sun hath his rest ;
There's a wind on the wave ;—
 There's a light on thy grave.

Last lay of a bird
Where the lime-bough is stirred ;
A vibration of lute,
And the music is mute ;
A sheath for the glave,
A rest for the slave ;—
 And a light on thy grave !

* * * * *

Oh, night, and oh, death !
And oh ! briefness of breath,

And oh! baldness of beauty to me
When beauty is buried with thee ;—
When the corpse-light is low on thy grave :—

* * * * *

Oh, love, shall I rave
When the light on thy grave
Should illumine my spirit to see
That the light of thy virtue shall be,
Though low thou art hid in the grave ?

* * * * *

The world, in night's bower,
Giveth thanks for this hour
Hymeneal and blest :—
There is peace in my breast,
There is peace on the wave ;
There's a light from thy grave.



THE BAIRNS O' THE TROUGH.*

LORD HUNTIE to the Laird o' Grant spak' cheerie, O!
spak' cheerie, O!

"Come oot, and see a gallant sicht that ne'er your ee'n can
weary, O!"

Lord Huntlie's ta'en the Laird o' Grant, a-risin' from the
table, O!

To where the muckle kitchen-court they weel to see were
able, O!

"Oh! whaur gat ye the gallant hounds, sae mony, O! sae
mony, O!

That wi' sic routh o' scraps and bits ye feed the best of
ony, O?

* Sir Walter Scott has this tradition in his "Tales of a Grandfather."

"For a' the leavin's o' their meal the servin' carles keep
bringin', O!

An' in a trough, baith lang and wide, the broken meats are
flingin', O!

"It wonders me, my Lord Huntlie, to see sae great a
feedin', O!

Not a' the tykes in hale Strathspey sic meatin' would be
needin', O!

"Nor sure King Jamie has sic routh o' hounds for sport and
daffin', O!"

"Ye'se bide a wee," said Lord Huntlie, "and rive ye're
sides wi' laughin', O!"

Then loudly blew the maister-cook upon a siller whistle, O!
An' straightway a' the toun was filled wi' skirl and yell and
bustle, O!

"But yon's no cry of tyke or hound? or sair they maun
be hurtit, O!"

"Ye'se bide a wee," said Lord Huntlie, "and sune be weel
divertit, O!"

Then schilly blew the maister-cook ;—eh ! what a rush and
rampin', O !

And oot into the yaird they pour, wi' yell and skraigh and
trampin', O !

“ Oh ! whaur gat ye the wee wee bairns, sae mony, O ! sae
mony, O !

A' clarted ower wi' glaur sae foul ? I canna sae them
bonnie, O !

“ There's curlin' locks that glint o' gowd, but ever kame had
kenned them, O !

There's rents and rags and tatters there wad tak' the warld
to mend them, O !

“ There's wee wee bodies only fit in mammies' airms to
nestle, O !

A' rolling ower and in the trough like famished swine to
wrestle, O !

“ Now schaw me fair, my Lord Huntlie, your riddle's
truthful readin', O !

For sic a sicht in Christian land some explanation's needin',
O ! ”

"Now bide, now bide," said Lord Huntlie; "the reason
ye'll be mindin', O!

For a' yon rabble-rout o' weans whose feedin' these are
findin', O!

"It's but a towmond, Chief o' Grant, a towmond and a
mornin', O!

Sin' you and I wi' kin and clan gied Farquharson a
warnin', O!

"For Brackley's murder, base and foul, we dressed the raiders
rarely, O!

Scarce ane was left to rue the deed, we harried them sae
sairly, O!

"Down Dee went ye, and up gaed I, wi' ax and sword and
burnin', O!

And faes were 'fore them, faes ahint, ilk side they would be
turnin', O!

"We spared nor beast, nor boure, nor bield, we spared nor
maid, nor leman, O!

An' a' the glen when even fell held scarce a man or
woman, O!

" But twice a hundred wailing weans ohn hame or help were sittin', O !

I deemed we'd teymed eneuch o' bluid, sae brocht them wi' us flittin', O !

" I meat them weel, as ye may see ; they sleep on couches raschen, O ! "

The Laird o' Grant look'd east and west, syne spak' in canny fashion, O !

" Noo, list, Lord Huntlie, list to me " (oh ! but his heart was dolie, O !) ;

" Ye've had their keep a year and day :—now mine's the duty truly, O !

" Ye'll gie them me, my Lord Huntlie, to-morn into my keepin', O ! "

" I trow ye're richt," Lord Huntlie said : " it's I will no be threapin', O ! "

The Chief o' Grant has ta'en the bairns, to fair Spey-side he's led them, O !

Wi' decent gear and fittin' cheer he doth provide and steid them, O !

Abroad he's set them through the clan ; they meet wi'
kindly carin', O !

An' ane and a', at his command, the name o' Grant are
bearin', O !

He's ca'ed them by the name o' Grant, but wi' the clansmen
ever, O !

They'll be "the Bairnies o' the Trough," where Spey does
run a river, O !



A CONCEIT

LADY, if Love sits laughing in thine eyes,
 Whence errant sunbeams, gathered, no more stray,
 (As those, thy wooers sing, and pen, and say);
Or thrones him in thy dimples, kingly-wise ;

Or, finding rich thy lip in sweet supplies
 Of dewy nectar, bides to quaff alway ;
 Nor seeks a home but thee for dark or day :
I am hard set with doubt, and dread surmise.

For why ? If these speak sooth, nor idly prate,
 And that the God with thee doth alway dwell,
 Prithee, what is't within my heart that cries,
 And is so stark, and so unquiet lies,
 And me to seek thy presence will impel ?
Love is but one ! It surely must be Hate !

ILL TO PLEASE.

THERE lived a bonnie maid on a time
In a house aside the sea ;
And seek ye far, and seek ye wide,
Was nane sae fair as she.

Was never a fish aneath the brine
Sae bright as gleamed her hair ;
Was never a moulit's * briest as white
As her bonnie broo sae fair.

An' a' the lads they coorted her :
" My dear, come hame wi' me,
An' I'll mak' ye a gudeman kind !"
But never an " Aye " said she !

* Moulit—sea-gull (French, *Mouette*).

An' down there cam' a soldier bold
A' glinting gold and reid ;
But she vowed the sunset was bonnier far,
Wi' a toss o' her dainty heid.

An' down there cam' the minister,
And weel he tell'd his tale ;
But she vowed 'twas sweeter far to hear
The sough of the western gale.

An' by there cam' a painter-chiel,
Och ! sirs, but it was grand
To see him paint the hale wide sea,
As big as my twa hand' !—

His wark was weel—himsel' was ill ;
And a gairdner loon fared waur,
For she vowed that for a' his bonnie flowers
As bonnie were on the shore.

Then lichtly wooed a gentleman.
Oh ! he was of high degree !
But she louted laigh, and said him “ Nay ”
For a' his courtesy.

Then Wast there cam' a white, white sail
A'-noddin' on the water,
And stepped on shore a sailor brave,—
Full sooth and saft he sought her !

Her folk said " Na ! ye'll no awa'
To sail the weary sea ! " }
But she laid in his her lily loof,
And down the sand gaed she.

And set her foot into the boat,
An' graspit fast the tiller ;
" An' wow, I'll no gang back e'enow,
For all the warldis siller !

" Then hey, the water ! and ho, the brine !
An' heugh, the saut sea faem !
And where my sailor loves to bide,
It's there I'll mak' my hame ! "



LAGNA CUMINEACH.*

OH! wae betide the bluidy Shaws,
And waefu' may their portion be;
For a' the hairm to Cumyn race
They wrought in pride and jealousye.

* This ballad is founded on the tradition of the massacre of the Comyns, by Shaw-Cor-fhi-a-cailach, the Buck-toothed, near the Calart Hill, in Rothiemurchus, Strathspey, N.B. He is said to have set an old woman to watch on the hill, "rocking the tow;" if the Comyns passed north, she was to cry, "The goats are in the Calart," if south, "The goats are in the rail."

Sir Thomas Comyn (fourth in descent from John, the first Red Comyn) obtained, says Mrs. Cumming Bruce ("Hist. Bruces and Comyns"), a lease of lands of Rothiemurchus, circa 1350, which were formerly part of the possessions of his family, but which had been held by the Shaws for nearly a century, in lease from the Bishop of Moray. His (Sir T. Comyn's) wife was the daughter of Macgregor; and the father of Shaw the Buck-toothed had married her sister; notwithstanding which, the brothers-in-law were always at feud, and in a skirmish for the possession of Rothiemurchus, James Shaw was killed. His son avenged his death, in the manner told by the ballad, circa 1365. Shaw, in his "History of Moray," says this Shaw the Buck-toothed was the man who commanded the thirty men of the Clan Chattan at Perth in 1396, opposing thirty of the Clan Cay (whom some assert to have been Comyns). Sir Walter Scott (*vide* "Fair Maid of Perth") calls the Chief of Clan Chattan, Macgillie Chattanoch, and describes him as more than fifty years of age.

Frae Rothiemurchus on the Spey,
To journey to the low countrie,
The Chief o' Cumyn and his men
Passed down as blythe as blythe can be.

Oh ! marked ye not, ye Cumyn bauld,
How red the sun set ower the lea ?
And saw ye not on Calart Hill
Yon cailleach * auld sit watching thee ?

Oh ! thocht ye on the sonsie wife
Wi' golden locks sae fair to see,
Set spinning by the ingle-neuk,
Or lilting to her bairnies wee ?

Oh ! nevermair, oh ! nevermair !
In Rothiemurchus woods to be—
Or spear the siller salmon fair
Where Spey runs onward to the sea.

She sate upo' the Calart Hill,
She rocked the tow sae eidentlie,
But up the north and down the south
She ever kept a carefu' ee.

* "Cailleach," an old wife.

She lookit south, and spake no word ;
She rocked, and northward syne looked she :
“ The goats are in the Calart,” cried
The cailleach, loud as loud could be.

Then down they cam', the bluidy Shaws,
All armed as prood as prood may be,
And sair set on the Cumyn loons—
That never thocht sic ill to dree.

An' weel they focht, and sair they fell ;
And oh ! the bluid ran fast and free ;
And high its reek rose up to Heaven
In witness o' such crueltye.

And when the nicht fell mirk and chill
The Cumyns slept as sound could be ;
And never a one shall wake again
When laughs the morning on the lea.

Oh ! wae betide the bluidy Shaws,
That could devise such strategie :
The lands they won they sune maun tyne ;
Nae benison's on crueltye.

For Freuchy's laird * shall be their lord,
Or ever they wot that such maun be ;
And thus the Cumyn bluid shall reign
Despite their pride and jealousy.

* " Freuchy's laird : " Bigla, daughter of Sir Gilbert Cumyn, of Glencherneck, married Sir John Grant, and brought to him, circa 1440, the lands of Freuchy and others, in Strathspey, N.B. A descendant of Shaw Cor-fhi-a-cailach having murdered his step-father, Dollas of Cantray, about 1595, his mother fled with the title-deeds of Rothiemurchus, etc., to the laird of Grant, who then got possession of the estates.



AN IDYL.

"THERE was a love at the back o' my life
Lang-syne," she said, and her een were dim ;
"When days and years with joy were rife
And young blood danced blithely through heart and
limb.

"There was a love," she said : "he was bonnie,
Oh ! he was bonnie and kind and leal !
I couldna lo'e him the best of ony,
Yet oh ! he vowed that he lo'ed me weel.

"Golden curls like the licht o' morning,
Deep looks, blue as a summer sky ;
And a lip that curled with a touch of scorning,
But softened to smiling when I was by.

“Bairns, we played i’ the warld together
Some short years—then he sighed ‘Good-bye!’
For his pinions fluttered in snow-white feather,
An’ he and his love flew up the sky.

“Others sin-syne my love cam’ seekin’;
I speired what else might serve their turn?
Till twa dark een in mine saft keekin’,
Taught a lesson I loved to learn.

“Yet oh! that love at the back o’ my life—
In the rosy days when we baith were young,
Fulfil my soul with a sweet sad strife,
As when an aulden lilt is sung.”



TO A YOUTH WHO SPAKE LIGHTLY OF WOMEN.

“Dis'-moi qui tu hantes ; je te dirai qui tu es !”

You say that women are all alike,
With a sneer and a shrug,—faith ! scarcely civil ;
And reckless how hard the blow you strike
Call this one a “Minx,” and that one a Devil !

You say that women are all alike,
That your world is wide, and mine is narrow . . .
There are stones a many in yon fell dyke,
And never a one has its perfect marrow.

You say that women are all alike !
Tell me, pray, of the women you know :
Being a woman myself, belike
A further light on your fact I'll throw.

* * * * *

These your friends ! They are scarcely mine !
Not, you'll say, a clear condemnation ;
Granted, perhaps ; but their fame and shine
Reaching my world win scant laudation.

These your friends ! They are none of mine.
Where did you seek them ? How found they you ?
" Like to like," saith the saw : I opine
You kin yourself with a queerish crew !

These ! from what I have heard and seen,
I hardly marvel at your contempt ;
Golden grain off the sand to glean,
Roots to dig out of rock, I ween
Is a feat one scarcely would care attempt !

But sure you cannot in reason say
(Or *saying*, say not the thing you *deem*)
That all the sex are but such as they ;
Slight variations on one known theme ?

Let me show you—your world's extent
Fails to embrace my sex' entirety.
If with such you will rest content,
Reason need never again aspire t'ye.

Sapient boy ! you profess to choose
" Pals " because they are fair, free, jolly ? . . .
You're fit, were *loss* not enough to lose,
For the ill you seek, the good you refuse,
To be rolled in nettles, or flogged with holly !

Let me advise you—seek A., B., C. :—
A., you'll acknowledge, has beauty rare ;
Friend of years she has been to me,
And her face, as her soul, is scarce so fair.

True, she has a provoking way
Of failing to see that a jest is "*fun*"
That showers a neighbour with scandal spray,
Or makes a joke of a fallen one !

B., with the boundless fund of mirth ;
B., with her wit, and her sparkling glee ;
Surely no X. Y. Z. on earth
Can rival my friend in her pure jollity.

Yes !—I admit she would scarcely brook
The free bold words that to X. you said—
Aye ! she sure would resent the look
Wherewith you insulted your " pal " lady Z. . . .

Then there's C., with a mind well stored,
Meet to match you, (for you're no fool,) -
Though perhaps it has never soared
To that rank French novel of latest school,

True, she is a devoted wife ;
Thinks—fond fool—he's the first of men
To whom she has pledged her heart and life ;
“ Pleasant for him,” you say,—“ but then,

“ Scarcely amusing for me.” Good lack !
Must all, to please you, consent to folly ?
Nay, lad—white's white, and black is black :
Go home and borrow your sister's dolly—

Make that your toy—which was made for sport ;
If some of my sex to be toys are willing,
I can't shame them ; I but exhort
You—who class your selected sort
With ours—as grain of the self-same milling !

Does the moon, pure sailing above the wind,
Shine less fair that she shines so high ?
Would those who adore her more pleasure find
Did their goddess reign in a nearer sky ?

Cease to grope i' the earth for sparks
You never would care to wear in ring!
Look aloft, prithee, where soar the larks :
'Tis quite as diverting ;—besides, they sing !

Cease to say we are all alike,
Lest the world believe that her best disdain you.
If you put your hand in a hornet's byke
For vain diversion, with jest or glike,
You're alone to blame if the insects pain you.



FABLES.

(Respectfully dedicated to the Society for the Regulation of Mourning.

October and November, 1876.)

I.

A KYLOE lived in a field,—
A common Kyloe of vulgar breed ;
A little starved Orkney, fed on weed
Of ocean, haply, for half his days ;
Large of head, and meagre of flank,
With tucked-up belly, and ribs pronounced
Strongly in character !

Chosen he,
With sundry fellows of like degree,
To travel down to the low countree,
Where good fat pasture should give them rank
Worthy the butcher ! This latter fact

From Kyloe's consciousness concealed,
Troubled him none ; so he kicked and bounced,
Gave himself airs in a hundred ways,
And snubbed three asses that shared his pasture,
Till these were forced to behave with tact
Lest matters might come to an open rupture—
Unpleasant, within the bounded space
Of their play-ground's limitation ;
And, indeed, they thought his air and grace
Could surely spring from nothing base,
But from breeding were outcome orthodox :
For asses are apt to take an ox
At his own self-valuation !
Now, it chanced one morning, from out the shed
Of nocturnal slumber the donkeys sped ;
And found Master Kyloe had early risen
Himself to bedizen
With trappings and signs of the deepest woe—
A bunch of nettles on either horn,
And a garland of belladonna twisted
Down to the very tip of his tail.
He stood with aspect all forlorn
And his eyes with tears bemisted,
Leaning his leanness against the rail.

The donkeys marvelled what pained him so ;
And one—the boldest of the three—
Ventured towards him gingerly !
“ Dull grief hath hung her drear achievement,
Fair sir, upon your majesty.
Explain, I pray, what dire bereavement
Works the disorder that we see ?
What near and dear one has departed
From crispèd grass, from purling stream,
From luscious oil-cake, juicy swede,
And left our good friend broken-hearted,
All vested thus in deepest weed ? ”
The Kylvie raised his drooping head :
“ Kind sirs, a personage is dead !
Lord Shorthorn Bull—with morning’s beam
Passed out of this terrestrial scheme !
A being very great indeed
Was he, and cost a mint o’ money
At the great breeder Beefie’s sale.
You may perhaps account it funny
I’ve seen so little of my relation
(He was my kinsman, of course you know !) :
But really I was in expectation
Every day, that he’d give me a hail

From t'other side of the rail.
I couldn't well call first, you see,
As I only arrived the beginning of summer—
It's not etiquette for the latest comer.
But dear ! poor fellow, had I foreseen
The end was so very soon to be,
I'd gladly have waived all ceremonie
And called in a cousinly way !
And now, alas ! I can but show
Cousinly kindness in weeds of woe ;
Which accounts for my present attire, of course,—
Poor dear old Shorthorn ! ”

And plenty more
Of the sort, each ass with admiring mien
And a sympathizing bray
Heard ; with much self-gratulation
That he had shown such penetration
As to think this Kyløe, ragged and rough,
Was somebody, natheless ; and made of stuff,
Kin to the matter that makes a lord !
Now, over the hedge, an honest horse,
Hearing the gist of the conversation,
Laughed aloud (for he wore no sleeve)—
“ Ha ! ha ! ha ! Young make-believe !

It's easy by mourning to prove connection
(‘Fore blockheads) that never was owned before.
Lord Shorthorn Bull, upon my word,
Would never have donned a nettle for you !
It strikes me, too, upon reflection,
This mourning mania is something new,
For when, last week, out the very same lot
As yours, there died a starveling stot,
You never so much as looked the way,
When they covered him up with his kindred clay !
Well, I ne’er before saw such a cause
For vested sorrow’s compliment :
Our brother stot dies—‘ Nature’s laws
We all in turn obey, poor fellow ! ’
Is all his tribute ; but, take tent,—
Lord Shorthorn Bull, or Sir Polled Aberdeen,
Or my Lady Alderney condescends
To show the common herd courtesy
By dying as they die : then do we
(Lest any should doubt we have fine relations)
Attune our voice to a doleful bellow,
Wear all the nettles and belladonna
We needful deem to do them honour ;
And swagger our grief in the morning sheen

On the sunny side of the fence, that nations
And people and beings all, may know we have fine relations."

II.

She stepped adown the village street—
A little old lady, sober and neat ;
With a quiet grey gown, and a quiet grey bonnet,
(What made all the gossips so stare as she passed ?)
And a tidy brown shawl with white flowering upon it.
She rang at the door of the doctor's house,
And crept within like a little grey mouse.
There seemed a sensation throughout the village
Where cronies gather out every door
The stores of a neighbour's repute to pillage,
And sift his grain on the public floor.
On the smallest excuse, and the briefest notice,
They'll tell you what sort of stuff his coat is,
What was his dinner, and whether he'll pay
His rent on the next Lady-day.
But the gossips stared each at each all aghast :
"What ! got no blacks for her brother, the doctor,
And him only buried 'fore yesterday ?"

The grocer's wife declared that it shocked her !
The mercer's mother said—

“Some folks say

He'd made away with his sister's money,
Who owed him no respect, she'd thought.
He died a bankrupt, they all knew well :
And never a *bit* of crape was bought
Of her son for the wife and the youthful seven
Left behind him—that *she* could tell !”
And all declared it was surely funny ;
But, as for that sister, 'twas quite a shame
To show herself in a mere grey gown
In the principal street of the town,
When her brother had left (they hoped) for heaven
Scarcely a week ! Was it decent ? Barely !
The sweep declared she was much to blame ;
And cracked a small joke on the daily woe
He wore for his kindred lying low !
But his wife declared he was quite profane :
So he tried to look solemn, and only looked sat on.
And gay went the gossiping clatter rarely,
All in the self-same vein :
Till the minister, passing, inquires what they chat on ;
And learns from a quint of sharp voices the cause

In various styles of reprobation !

“ And this is the source of the great sensation—

A breach of Madam ‘The Custom’s’ laws ? ”

The worthy minister gravely said.

“ I happen to know what became of the sum

That was needed to shroud the doctor’s sister

(It seems) in conventional black from the blister

Of carping tongues that will soon be dumb,

I trust, when their owners have heard my say !

That twenty-pound note, friends, went to pay—

For the widow and orphan’s shelter and bed :

In a word, it went

To pay the rent

Of the house the doctor inhabited,

For the next half-year,

Till it might appear

What his poor family then could do :

And the dame who has won such censure from you

Couldn’t afford your scruples to treat,

And turn her poor relatives out in the street ;

So has set an example we all should take

Of doing the right, for the right’s own sake,

Regardless of prejudice, fashion, or praise ;

Which latter—my friends—is her due !

Good evening !"—And all went their several ways,
But not one whit their pastor's speech
Convinced the generality
Of those his hearers, that such a breach
Of Custom's oft rubble-built wall
 Could be palliated,
 Or exculpated,
By any good act of them all.

 And their shepherd, shaking his head meanwhile,
Muttered, when out of his flock's ear-reach—
Muttered, in most unclerical style—
" Hang this conventionality ! "

III.

A great man died !
What was his nation, it matters none—
Whether he was a Caribee,
Whether he lived in Ashantee,
Whether he worshipped fire and sun,
Or over a bridge of a single hair
Would enter a heaven of houris fair
As the waters of Abana ;

Whether he hoped, by Buddha's side,
When his ultimate death was died,
To share in the "Nirwana :"
Whether, a Maori chief, he knew
Deeply the mysteries of "Tapu ;"
Whence he came and whither he went
Is a matter wholly indifferent ;
He wasn't a Christian, that is all,
But he had a sumptuous funeral !
A sumptuous funeral had the Chief,
Where all that was fitting to do was done,
And feasting, and yelling, and dancing, galore
Beyond description, beyond belief.
They may have slaughtered of wives a score,
May have buried of slaves a hundred lives,
Or simply whittled themselves with knives :
I know not, but all that was due was done
By the dead Chief's people every one.
The doleful revels had reached their height ;
 They had put him by,
 Underneath the sky—
The sky that maketh unvarying pall
For mourners and for funeral,—
When a missionar' passed—a godly wight

(One who had given up home and kin
To convince a pagan world of sin)
Who groaned and shook his head at the sight,
And sought to gather him natives around
To whom some text he might fairly expound
 'Gainst the pagan show
 And most godless woe
He witnessed on every side.
But failing to gather an audience
By any conceivable pretence
From on-lookers or actors out,
He turned to go on his way about ;
When he was joined by a native scholar,
A man of parts, who had crossed the seas
For learning at our universities.
He noted the missionar's dolor,
And swift its cause descried :
" Good sir," he said, " this gives you pain ?
You judge such funeral pageant vain.
But surely, in the vaunted home
Of the gentle faith you love to preach
You likewise hold your funeral feast—
Like us barbarians ; though in form
Of yielding up his prey to the worm

Differing. Yea ! I have marked it so :
From those the greatest to those the least,
As far as power and means would go
(Ay, even beyond the last, I trow)
You celebrate your dying—
With plume and trappings, with hearse and gloom,
With felt or feignèd crying ;
As if you laid in eternal tomb
All you had loved underneath the dome
Of an unpitying Heaven !
Is it consistent with what you teach
That the poor should stint them (I've seen it) in bread,
Or incur a debt to hang like lead
Round their yokèd neck, that the world may see
How they mourn their dust-kin decently ?
'Proper respect for the dead ?' In truth,
What would *he* care (if you feel your faith)—
Should he be at peace in a waiting-land
Near a Saviour who Himself hath given
That the bonds of death might be surely riven—
What would *he* care that a doleful band
Should celebrate what they dub his *death*
By wearing a special hue of vesture ;
With fine-drawn rules of degree, and date,

Of measure and of texture ;
Or spend what might relieve the quick
In laying mould to its parent earth
With useless pomp ?

Why, it's matter for mirth
To see Practice play Theory such a trick !
With the great, because it's ' the fashion ' forsooth,
With the humble, because they copy the great !
Go back, good sir, and preach at home :
'Tis needless over the seas to roam,

For these abuses
Are Christian uses;
And flourish as free on British loam
As ever upon the fair white sand
That fringes the shore of our heathen land.
The form may differ—the spirit's the same ;
And neither, or both, are matter for blame."

THE COCK O' THE NORTH.

*(Written to the Scotch air of the name, for Miss Christina Graham,
Murthly Castle.)*

OH! I'll sing ye a song o' a gallant brown birdie,
Chief o' all others in worth;
He plumes him, and fluffs him, and ruffles him rarely,
For he is the cock o' the north!
Then hey, the muir-cock! ho, the muir-cock!
Hey, the cock o' the north!
Then hey, the muir-cock! ho, the muir-cock!
The bonnie brown cock o' the north!

I'll sing ye a song o' a canty young gallant,
The bravest this side o' the Forth;
Sae fair is his face, and sae royal his grace,
For he is the king o' the north.

Then hey, for Charlie ! ho, for Charlie !
Hey, the king o' the north !
They hey, for Charlie ! ho, for Charlie !
The gallant young king o' the north !

They may clack o' gay feathers, and musical thrapples
Are found in some parts o' the earth ;
Gie me the brown vest, and the crawin' sae crouse,
O' the muir-cock up i' the north !
Then hey, the muir-cock ! ho, the muir-cock !
Hey, the cock o' the north !
Then hey, the muir-cock ! ho, the muir-cock !
The bonnie brown cock o' the north !

Oh, gie me a pen, gif a sword be na mine,
To fight for this gallant o' worth ;
An' I'll write ye a stave, shall mak' others craw brave
As the bonnie brown cock o' the north !
It's hey, for Charlie ! ho, for Charlie !
King and cock o' the north !
Be ripe and ready, be stern, be steady,
To fight for the cock o' the north !

THE LAST WOLVES IN MORAY.

OH, the wolf! oh, the great grey wolf!
He houffed in a hole at the foot o' a cairn,
Wi' his great grey wife and their pawky grey bairn :
At the foot o' a cairn that was heapit aboon
The banes o' some auld-warld fechtin' loon!

Oh, the wolf!

An' they were the last o' an evil race
In the land o' Moray that had a place ;
A' the nicht, by the glint o' the mune or the levin,
They were oot at their wark, or their plays ill-contriven.

Oh, the wolf!

An' he would awa a lambie to seek,
Or maybe a calf that was new-born and weak ;
Or a bairnie forbye, for nae-thing cam' ill
That served the wee wolfukies' wamie to fill.

Oh, the wolf!

Grey madam would sit, whiles her man was awa',
And teach the grim younker the banes how to chaw,
Or glower withoot to the edge o' the wood
For a dinner to quiet his querulous mood.

Oh, the wolf!

It fell on a day that the hale kintra-side
Vowed what they had borne they'd no longer abide;
So they waited and watched, till, by labour and care,
They got the grey raider tracked hame til' his lair.

Oh, the wolf!

To his den by the cairn the grey raider was tracked,
But to finish the venture the principal lacked—
For scarcely a chiel could be found was so brave
As to choose him a wolf for a possible grave!

Oh, the wolf!

Now, Duncan was stark, and young Donald was bauld;
They had tint o' their lambies the best o' the fauld:
A neebor's misfortune (at least so folks tell)
Comes hame to ye best when it touches y'rsel'.

Oh, the wolf!

Thus, stoundin' wi' loss, they on vengeance were bent,
And forward did step to declare their intent
That ere the neist mune her last quarter could pass
The last wolf in Moray should fatten the grass.

Oh, the wolf!

But, och! on a terrible, terrible day
The neebors a' gathered to hear o' the fray;
For Duncan comes hirplin', a' bluidy and pale,
As if a score deevils were close at his tail!

Oh, the wolf!

Oh! wae was his story—his brither was deid,
The brutes were na' mortal, for strength and for speed;
Himsel' had escaped wi' the half o' his skin,
An' awsome the fear and the plight he was in.

Oh, the wolf!

Each seizin' what weapon or tool he might find,
The swift left the tardy to struggle behind;
An' cursin' and shoutin' wi' fury and wae,
They rushed to the scene o' the fearfu' affray!

Oh, the wolf!

What's this that comes dragging its length on the moul's?
'Tis Donald! His wraith! the saints comfort their souls!
Wi' gore a' disguised, and wi' barely a clout
O' raiment to hap his torn carcase about!

Oh, the wolf!

Noo Duncan ran up, and he skraighed in his fear:
"He's back frae the deid bluidy witness to bear
O' my cowardice base, and my fause traitorie;
I'm guilty, my brither! ochone, wae is me!

Oh, the wolf!

"I took sic a scunner, I couldna' but run
When the wolves cried anear: and this woundin' was
done
Wi' my knife to secure from suspicion or blame
Mine appearing . . . Gang back, bluidy ghaist, whence
ye came!"

Oh, the wolf!

"Oh! I am nae ghaist, but am Donald himsel',
Alive, ye ill traitour, your falsehood to tell.
Now listen, kind folk, and ye'll judge us aright
When ye hear how I cam' in this horrible plight.

Oh, the wolf!

“First watched we the parent wolves safe frae their den,
An’ here, at the oot-gang strait o’ the glen,
I bade Duncan watch, lest the brutes should tak’ thought,
An’ return ere the death o’ their offspring was wrought.

Oh, the wolf!

“I creep’d through the hole, and made shift i’ the mirk
To do the young wolfie to death wi’ my dirk;
Nor heeded his skirling,—I kenned there was ward
Withoot, and that Duncan was girt wi’ a sword.

Oh, the wolf!

“Oh! how could I think I was basely forlaine?—
I turned me aboot when the wolf-cub I’d slain,
When a wild and fierce howling struck dread on mine ear,
And at the den’s entering his parents appear!

Oh, the wolf!

“A flash o’ white teeth! and red een, and a spurt
O’ bluid, hot and rank :—was’t mysel’ that was hurt?
I wist not,—but stabbit oot straight strokes and fast,
Till heaved, rolled, and fell the huge carcass at last.

Oh, the wolf!

“She comes ! the grey dam, at the back o’ her lord !
—Oh ! Duncan, ye traitour, wert there wi’ thy sword
For life might I hope !—She’s gripped haud o’ my wrist,
The right ane . . . I’m weak . . . I hae struck . . . I
hae missed !

Oh, the wolf !

“Nae mair do I mind clear eno’ for to tell,
Till, bitten and torn by the carcase, I fell ;
But I think, through the gloam, that I thrust in her ee
My left-hand gripped blade:—Is it there ? Will ye see ?”

Oh, the wolf !

They ran and they witnessed the truth o’ his tale,
An’ swift ’fore the laird the false Duncan they hale ;
Who, judged a base traitour, got more than his fill
Of hanging, sin-syne, on a neighbouring hill.

Oh, the wolf !

And Donald, we trust, was borne hame to his bield,
Where, wi’ time and gude carin’, his hurts were a’ healed ;
And thanks be to him that the last o’ a band
O’ robbers were cast frae our braw Moray-land !

Oh, the wolf !

A MADRIGAL.

HAVE I not wooed thee, sweet—

Where golden light-beams fleck the bowered stream,
Like some illumined dream

That touches on the shadow of the night ;

Where the soft splash of oar, and tinkling drops,
And drone of insect, made melodious chord
To 'company my suing ?

Did I not win thee, love—

There, where the fern adorns the mossy brae,
And the dun coneys play,

And peer in wonder at thy beauty bright :

Where croons the cushat in the red pine tops,
And russet squirrel heaps a winter hoard,
And gnats are gnats pursuing ?

Have I not kissed thee mine—

And trembled at my daring as I kissed ;

And saw thee through a mist

Of blessed confusion at my new-won right ?—

Ah! Nature's wealth, by stream and bank and copse,

No sight more dainty-sweet shall e'er afford

Than lovers at their wooing !



HANS EULER.

From the German of T. C. Seidl.

"HIST! Martha—who is knocking? Admit the man, I say!

'Twill be some hapless pilgrim, whose steps have gone astray.

Hah! welcome, noble warrior; come, join our homely fare:

The bread is white and plentiful, the wine is pure and rare."

"I will not eat—I came not here in search of drink or food,

But, if ye be Hans Euler, I've sworn to have your blood.
Know you that scarce a moon has passed, since I have
named ye foe?

For then had I a brother dear—that brother you laid low.

"As prone to earth he, gasping, fell, I gave my promise true,
That soon or late would I revenge his bloody death on you."

"And if I slew your brother, 'twas in fair and open strife.
And seek ye to avenge him? Come on! for death or life.

"Yet I'll not fight thee in the house, betwixt the door and wall,
But in the fullest face of *that*, for which I stand or fall;
Martha!—the sword—ye know it,—by which yon traitor fell;
Return I not—Tyrol is large enough! Dear, fare you well."

Then out, and o'er the neighbouring fields together went the pair;
Her golden gates had opened wide, the early morning fair.
Stoutly the stranger stepped behind, as Hans led on the way,
And smiling o'er their pathway played each sunny morning ray.

Now on the summit standing—the glorious Alpen-world
Before them lay extended, like banner bright unfurled ;
'Mong cloud-wreaths peered in beauty rare, wide valleys
richly blest,
And hamlets nestled in their arms, and herds grazed on
their breast ;

And streams ran glittering through them, and fissures
yawned beneath ;
Below were heights with forest crowned, around them
heaven's pure breath ;
And further—naught. Of God's own peace, that scene the
impress bore ;
In heart and hamlet could be found, the spirit true of
yore.

The two beheld it from above—the stranger dropped his
brand ;
But Hans, he stretchèd out his arm o'er his belovèd
land :
“For *that* I fought,” he said, “’gainst *that* your brother
came as foe,
For *that* I did him battle, for *that* I laid him low !”

The stranger glanced around him, then in Hans' face again. He stared, and tried to raise his arm—the effort was in vain.

“And if ye slew my brother—’twas, indeed, in fairest fight. I crave your pardon—Hans, your hand—for you were in the right.”



ONE OF THE "SONGS OF GLOAMING."

*Translated from the French of Victor Hugo, at the request
of Mrs. Isaac Taylor.*

SINCE our hours fulfilled be
Of trouble and misfortune keen ;
Since the things fast-bound by thee
By themselves unbound have been ;

Since where we must go, are gone
Fathers, mothers, loved and blest ;
Since the children, one by one,
Ere we sleep have sought their rest ;

Since this earth, whereon laid low
Thou thy copious tears dost shower,
Holds our roots within her now,
And, already, many a flower ;

Since, with voices that we love,
Mingle those that once were dear ;
Since our fair illusions prove
Filled with bygone shadows drear ;

Since, when ecstasy we sip,
Sorrow welleteth from the rill ;
Since our life's the beaker's lip
One can neither void nor fill ;

Since the further we progress
• Deeper float the shadows round us ;
Since Hope, lying flatteress,
No more cunning tales hath found us ;

Since the chiming dial lends
No promise for a future day ;
Since we cannot see who wends
Darkling on the twilight way ;—

Set thy spirit out this earth,—
Set thy dream elsewhere than here ;
Not in our wave thy pearl of worth,
Nor lies thy path upon our sphere.

When the Night no star-gleam knows,
Rock thee on the billowy seas ;
Veilèd close, like Death she shows ;
Bitter, e'en as Life, are these !

Mysteries 'bide in Depth and Shade,
From all mortal ken concealed ;
God their use of speech forbade
Till all secrets be revealed.

Other eyne have sought the deeps,
Vainly, of these floods unnumbered ;
Vainly, sieging heavenly steeps,
Other eyne with shade are cumbered.

From the World benighted crave
Peace for thy poor desert heart ;
Seek at this urn thy lips to lave,
Ask from this concert just one part.

Soar thou ;—all woman-kind excel,
And let thy sweet eyne stray between
That supreme heaven, where spirits dwell,
And this earth, where graves are green.

GLOSSARY.



RUN-RIG.

- Page 23. *Run-rig*, ridge and furrow, alternate.
,, 24. *The Wild Cat*, the cognizance of the Clan Chattan.
,, 24. *Tòom*, empty.
,, 25. *Bree*, broth.
,, 26. *Abeigh*, at a distance.
,, 26. *East*, in Gaelic, this expression means—to Hell.

THE BAIRNS O' THE TROUGH.

- ,, 37. *Tyke*, a cur dog.
,, 38. *Clarted wi' glaur*, smeared with dirt.
,, 39. *Towmond*, twelvemonth.
,, 39. *Bield*, shelter.
,, 40. *Teymed*, spilt.
,, 40. *Threapin'*, contending.

ILL TO PLEASE.

- ,, 45. *Loof*, fist, hand.

TO A YOUTH WHO SPAKE LIGHTLY OF WOMEN.

Page 52. *Marrow* (Scot.), equal, match.

FABLES.

„ 61. *Take tent* (Scot.), take heed, note.

THE COCK O' THE NORTH.

„ 71. *Thrapples*, wind pipes.

„ 71. *Crouse*, bold.

THE LAST WOLVES IN MORAY.

„ 72. *Houffed*, lived.

„ 72. *Levin*, lightning.

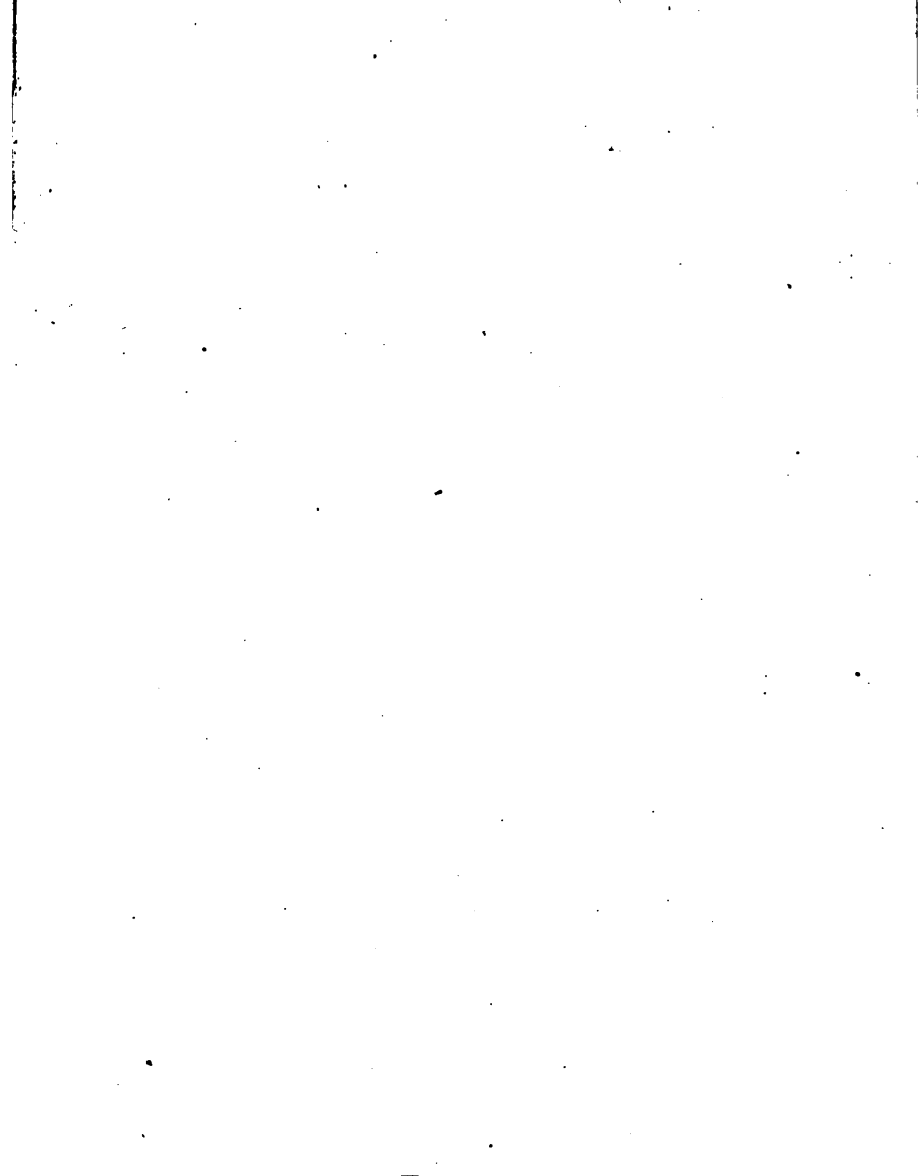
„ 72. *Wamie*, stomach.

„ 74. *Stoundin'*, smarting.

„ 74. *Hirplin'*, limping.

„ 75. *Scunner*, terror, loathing.

„ 76. *Forlaine*, forsaken.



RETURN
TO →

(Main)

NRLF

1	2	3
4	5	6

ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS

DUE AS STAMPED BELOW

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